

Revised: December 11, 2007

Virginia Department of Education – Office of Pupil Transportation

Pupil Transportation Operations Assessment Program

In accordance with the Regulations Governing Pupil Transportation, each school division is required to follow and comply with the regulations set forth by the Board of Education. In addition, school divisions must comply with requirements in the *Code of Virginia* pertaining to pupil transportation. These laws and regulations are in place to promote the greatest care possible be taken when transporting children within the Commonwealth of Virginia. To ensure compliance with these laws and regulations, the Virginia Department of Education will, from time to time, conduct checks of local pupil transportation operations.

8VAC20-70-20. Transportation of children. The greatest care shall be exercised at all times in the transportation of school children.

Scope of a Local Operations Assessment

- 1. Briefing with Division Superintendent or Designee:** The Virginia Department of Education (VA DOE), Pupil Transportation Services staff member will notify the division superintendent or designee the work day prior to a visit to the school division and request a meeting with the division superintendent or designee. Upon arrival at the school division superintendent's office, the Pupil Transportation Services staff member will show proper identification (State ID). At the meeting with the superintendent or designee, the Pupil Transportation Services staff member will explain the nature of the visit (Fleet assessment, records check, etc.), and answer any questions the superintendent or designee may have.
- 2. Fleet Assessment:** In accordance with 8-VAC 20-70-130; the Virginia Department of Education Pupil Transportation Services staff member will select a random number of buses to inspect. The VA DOE, Pupil Transportation staff member may conduct a level 1 inspection, level 2 inspection or warranted visual inspection. The level 1 and 2 inspections will be in accordance with the inspection level guidelines set forth by the VA DOE. Any deficiencies found compromising the safety of passengers, which are not able to be repaired while the staff member is on-site, will be noted on a VA DOE form EB-17, "Report of School Bus Deficiencies." Once the repair is completed, the EB-17 form is to be forwarded, with documentation of the completed repair, to the division superintendent for signature and mailed to the Virginia Department of Education, Pupil Transportation Services, P.O. Box 2120, Richmond, VA 23218-2120.

- 3. Driver Records Assessment:** In accordance with 8-VAC-20-70-280 and 8 VAC 20-70-350; the Virginia Department of Education Pupil Transportation Services staff member will observe the practice of and procedures for documenting all records related to school bus and activity vehicle drivers.
- 4. Regulatory Assessment:** In accordance with all other General Regulations in Part II, codes 8 VAC 20-70-20 thru 8 VAC 20-70-250; the Virginia Department of Education, Pupil Transportation Services staff member will check for compliance with these regulations.

The VA DOE Pupil Transportation Services staff member's on-site visit is meant to be a positive experience for the division's Pupil Transportation department, with a focus on technical assistance and preventive action. The VA DOE staff member will gladly assist in the resolution of any problems or concerns the school division may have regarding any aspect of pupil transportation and operational functionality. The staff member will also provide any information or other guidance necessary to ensure local compliance with the *Code of Virginia* and Board of Education regulations.

After the assessment has been completed, the VA DOE Pupil Transportation Services staff member will complete a written report to the Director of Support Services, Virginia Department of Education. A letter outlining the findings of the operations assessment will then be mailed to the superintendent of the school division, with a copy to the division's pupil transportation director.